

ACTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
68 WINDSOR AVENUE, ACTON MA 01720
MINUTES
April 28, 2015

Present: Ryan Bettez, Nancy Kolb, Ken Sghia-Hughes and Robert Whittlesey
Absent: Bernice Baran
Also Present: Kelley Cronin
Attending: Martin Segal, Sharon Craig, Teresa Moreland, Beverly Davis, Connie Taylor, Marsha Martin, Mary Mullin, Al Van Mourik, Virginia Loftus

Mr. Whittlesey called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. The Board reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting. Ms. Kolb made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Baran and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the minutes of the March 31, 2015 meeting, as amended.

2. Ms. Cronin updated the Board on operations. There are a lot of transfers and therefor more units turning over. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that Rusty Martin was still out due to knee surgery. Mr. Whittlesey decided to take the agenda item regarding the pianos in the community room out of order because there were so many interested people in attendance.

Ms. Cronin gave the background and explained that at the March meeting when the Board was reviewing the plans for the refurbishing they asked why there were two pianos. Ms. Cronin explained that one piano was privately owned by a resident of Windsor Green and the former Director had allowed the piano to be put in the community room because of concern regarding the weight of the piano and noise. The Board wanted to discuss whether or not private property should be stored in the community room. The Board asked Ms. Cronin to place this item on the agenda for the April meeting so that the owner of the piano could be invited to the meeting to discuss. It was explained to people that were attending the meeting that the Board would discuss the issue first then open the floor to residents and guests.

Mr. Sghia-Hughes stated he brought the issue up because he wanted to know why there were two pianos and wanted to know who was allowed to use them. Ms. Cronin explained that the piano that belonged to the Acton Housing Authority (AHA) was allowed to be used by anyone and that the one owned by Mr. Segal was only allowed to be used by him. Mr. Segal's piano is locked and covered and only he has a key. Mr. Bettez asked Mr. Segal if there was insurance and if the AHA was covered under the insurance policy. Mr. Segal said he did have insurance but the AHA was not covered. Mr. Bettez said the Board would want a copy of the policy and may want the AHA to be covered as well. Ms. Kolb asked if Mr. Segal would allow anyone else to use the piano. Mr. Segal said he would consider allowing people who knew how to use his piano to use it. The Board asked Mr. Segal how the piano came to be in the community room. Mr. Segal stated that when he moved in over seventeen years ago the former Director, Betty McManus, knew he taught piano and how important the piano was to him. He said she offered to allow him to put it in the community room when a unit became available because she did not want the piano on the second floor due to concerns about its weight and that she was concerned the noise from the piano may disturb other residents. Mr. Segal said he never would have moved into Windsor Green if he was not allowed to bring his piano. The Board opened the floor to those present for questions or comments. Ms. Moreland and Ms. Davis both spoke in support of allowing the piano to stay in the community room. They said that the

community room was rarely used by large numbers of people and therefore the extra space was not needed. They also spoke about how they thought it would be very harmful to Mr. Segal if he could not have his piano here. Several residents spoke about how nice it was to hear Mr. Segal play the piano while they were picking up their mail. A woman who was not an AHA resident, Marcia Martin, suggested that it was not fair of the Board to tell Mr. Segal he had to get rid of his piano. She also said that if the piano was removed Mr. Segal would leave Windsor Avenue and that he would be homeless. She suggested there would be newspaper story about it and that it would make the AHA look very bad if they made someone homeless. Ms. Cronin said she wanted to clarify because she was the only one who had spoken to Mr. Segal prior to the Board meeting. Ms. Cronin said she had not told Mr. Segal that he would have to move his piano only that the piano had come up at the Board meeting for discussion and would be on the agenda for the April meeting. Ms. Cronin explained to Mr. Segal that the Board was concerned about private property being stored in the community room, due to liability issues and that they were concerned it was not available for community use. Ms. Cronin let Mr. Segal know he should attend the April meeting so that he could answer any questions or concerns with the Board. There were more questions and feedback between the Board and attendees. The Board told Mr. Segal that they were going to consider the issue and the feedback they received from residents and discuss the issue again at the next meeting.

Due to the time spent discussing the piano there were several agenda items were skipped over and only items requiring a vote were addressed.

3. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that the State Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) had issued request for proposals for auditing services for State Public Housing Programs. DHCD qualified three auditing firms and the firm that had done the AHA audits over the past few years had not responded to DHCD's request for proposals and was not on the list. Ms. Cronin solicited all three firms pre-qualified by DHCD for proposals to provide auditing services for the fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016. Only one of the firms responded, Guyder Hurley. Their proposal was for \$7,920 for the single audit and \$3,000 for the DHCD Agreed upon Procedures (AUP). The AUP is not required for fiscal year 2014 but will be for fiscal years 2015 and 2016. Mr. Bettez made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Sghia-Hughes and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the Contract for auditing services with Guyder Hurley for fiscal years 2014-2016 with no AUP for fiscal year 2014.

4. Mr. Bettez discussed a property for sale at 536 Massachusetts Avenue. The owner has an accepted offer but wants a backup offer. Mr. Bettez, Mr. Whittlesey, Ms. Baran and Ms. Cronin had all looked at the property. The Board discussed the benefits of being able to acquire a multi-family property vs. constructing five new units. The Board believed the property was in good condition and very reasonably priced. Mr. Bettez thought it would be worth taking the steps necessary for a backup offer should the accepted offer not get financing. The Board agreed and thought the first thing the AHA should do before making a backup offer is get an appraisal. Ms. Baran made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Sghia-Hughes and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Authorize the Executive Director, Ms. Cronin, to procure an appraisal of 536 Massachusetts Avenue.

5. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that the Sudbury Housing Trust had withdrawn their proposal for lottery services due to the perceived conflict of interest. Ms. Cronin presented the proposal from MCO Housing Services for the Meadows Project. Mr. Bettez made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Baran and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the contract with MCO Housing Services to conduct the lottery for the two units at the Meadows.

6. Ms. Baran made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Sghia-Hughes and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the March voucher (monthly list of accounts payable) as presented.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley A. Cronin
Executive Director

Attachments for the April 28, 2015 meeting:

Minutes of the March 31, 2015 meeting, Audit proposal from Guyder Hurley, DHCD Public Housing Notice 2015-03 suspending the implementation of AUP dated February 6, 2015, DHCD Public Housing Notice regarding State Public Housing Audits and the AUP with a list of three qualifying audit firms, Proposal from MCO Housing Services for two rental units at the Meadows, Letter from Sudbury Housing Trust withdrawing their lottery proposal, March voucher